

Exemplars scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits of Writing.

Prompt: Set 2

Writing

DIRECTIONS:

Read the writing prompt below. Use the space on this page for your prewriting activity. Then write your first draft on the following two pages.

Favorite Authors Week is coming up at your school. During this week the school invites published authors to speak to the students. Write a letter to your principal to persuade him/her to invite your favorite author to speak to the students at your school.

Your letter should:

- Target a specific audience and purpose.
- Organize clear ideas into meaningful sequence.
- Be in appropriate business letter form.

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

AIMS Writing is a summative test of writing that is scored holistically. The prompt is revealed only at the time of testing. The student responses are produced in one sitting without any outside assistance during the writing process. Other than consulting a dictionary or a thesaurus, the student is writing entirely on his or her own. The AIMS score offers a snapshot of how well the student writes to the cold prompt on that day. Students who have the opportunity to write often in many different settings will better demonstrate the skills they have learned when they respond to the AIMS prompt.

The holistic rubric used for scoring AIMS Writing is based on the 6 Traits of Writing used as a teaching tool in Arizona classrooms. Strand 2 of the Academic Writing Standard is also based on the 6 Traits of Writing. In the classroom, teachers can focus on one or more traits according to their lesson plans, score writing for individual trait(s), and offer constructive feedback on the trait(s) to each student. Teaching writing at any level requires specific feedback, and using the 6 Traits of Writing is an excellent way to assist students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses throughout the school year.

Scoring for AIMS with the holistic rubric emphasizes the traits that are most important for recognizing good writing. Ideas, content development, and organization are the heart of any piece of writing. Without clear, focused ideas developed logically with supporting details, a paper will not communicate the intended message. Voice, word choice, and fluency are the next most important elements of a written response. With appropriate vocabulary and the crafting of sentences, the writer can enhance ideas and connect with his or her audience, whether formally or informally. Conventions are also important, but even with good skills in conventions, a response will not communicate well without the other qualities.

Each of the following papers is assigned a score from 1 to 6. A score point 1 paper is inferior, a score point 2 paper is poor, a score point 3 paper is inadequate, a score point 4 paper is appropriate and acceptable, a score point 5 paper is excellent and skillful, and a score point 6 paper is sophisticated and skillful. Perfect papers do not exist; therefore, even those that score 5 or 6 will have some errors.

HOLISTIC RUBRIC BASED ON SIX TRAITS OF WRITING

<p>SCORE POINT 6</p> <p>Response is sophisticated and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exceptional clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization that often show insight. • in-depth and/or creative exploration of the topic using rich, relevant, and credible details. • a strong, perhaps creative, beginning and a satisfying conclusion. • specifically and carefully chosen words that are skillfully crafted into phrases and sentences that enhance meaning. • intentional and committed interaction between the writer and the reader. • effective and/or creative use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 5</p> <p>Response is excellent and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization. • a balanced and thorough exploration of the topic using relevant details. • an inviting beginning and a satisfying sense of closure. • a broad range of carefully chosen words crafted into phrases and varied sentences that sound natural. • awareness of the reader and commitment to the audience and topic. • effective use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 4</p> <p>Response is appropriate and acceptable in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas adequately developed with a clear and coherent presentation of ideas with order and structure that can be formulaic. • relevant details that are at times general or limited; organization that is clear, but sometimes predictable. • a recognizable beginning and ending, although one or both may be somewhat weak. • effective word choice that is functional and, at times, shows interaction between writer and audience. • somewhat varied sentence structure with good control of simple constructions; a natural sound. • control of standard conventions although a wide range is not used; errors that do not impede readability.
<p>SCORE POINT 3</p> <p>Response is inadequate in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad or simplistic ideas that are understood but often ineffective. • attempts at organizing that are inconsistent or ineffective; beginnings and endings that are underdeveloped; repetitive transitional devices. • developmental details that are uneven, somewhat predictable or leave information gaps; details are not always placed effectively in the writing. • reliance on clichés and overused words that do not connect with the reader; limited audience awareness. • monotonous and sometimes misused words; sentences that may sound mechanical, although simple constructions are usually correct. • limited control of standard conventions with significant errors 	<p>SCORE POINT 2</p> <p>Response is poor in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overly simplistic and sometimes unclear ideas that have insufficiently developed details • sequencing of ideas that is often just a list; missing or ineffective details that require reader inference to comprehend and follow. • missing beginning and/or ending. • repetitive, monotonous, and often misused words are awkwardly strung into sentences that are difficult to read because they are either choppy or rambling; most sentences begin with repetitive noun + verb. • lack of audience awareness. • little control of basic conventions resulting in errors impeding readability. 	<p>SCORE POINT 1</p> <p>Response is inferior in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of purpose or ideas and sequencing. • organization that obscures the main point. • an attempt that is too short to offer coherent development of an idea, if it is stated. • extremely limited vocabulary that shows no commitment to communicating a message. • sentences with confusing word order that may not permit oral reading. • severe and frequent errors in conventions.

Dear Princeable,
The school and I were wondering
if we could have Favorite Author of the
week?
Sincerely,

Both a salutation and a closing are included in this brief response; however, there is no coherent development or sequencing of the vague idea “favorite Author of the week.” The writing earns a score point 1.

The response is not a 2 because of its brevity and lack of skill demonstration in developing an idea.

Favorite Authors
I would like to invite the author
of Harry Potter because I think she
makes good books and everybody
likes Harry Potter and I want to
now how she comes up with
good ideas for making the books
and if she will ever retire from
making books and if we can
all be in one of her movies and
if she will ever make more
movies and books because everybody
likes her books and if we can
please have her next book
she makes before everybody
so please principal let her
come to are school.
THE END

There is no attempt at letter format in this score point 2 response. The beginning and ending are underdeveloped, but they do exist. The ideas are a rambling list without sufficient details for support. One attempt at connecting with the audience is found at the end: "So please principal let Her come to are school." Transitioning between ideas is facilitated with only the repetitive conjunction "and." There is little control of basic conventions with random capitalization, only one end mark for punctuation, and common words misspelled (because, now for know, making).

The response is not a 1 because ideas are included and there are some details (in the form of questions to ask the author) offered. The response is not a 3 because the one rambling sentence does not demonstrate control of simple constructions and the beginning and ending are missing.

Dear,

Mr. principal My name is _____ and I'm in first grade and I love to read one of my favorite authors of all time is R.L. Stine. She's the best and I was hoping you would invite her to author day at school next week. I'll give you three reasons why. One because I know if you invited her everyone would show up for author's day and I know I'd be sitting in front row so I could get her autograph. Number two is because if everyone here's about her stories they might all decide to start reading a lot more. Number three is because nobody in this whole school has ever heard of the other author you invited so please take consideration to my thought thank you

Sincerely,

Grade 6

Score Point 3b (Set 2)

This score point 3 response offers ideas and has some formulaic attempts (One because, Number two, and Number three) at organization. The purpose (inviting “R.L stine” to “author day next week”) is supported with uneven and ineffectively placed details. “Number three because nobody in the whole school has ever heard of the other author you invited.” Predictable details (“I know if you invited her everyone would show up for author’s day . . .”) offer uneven development. Sentences are awkward with misused words: “so please take concideration to my thout thank you.” Conventions are inconsistent with numerous punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors. While an attempt of letter formatting is made, the writing is not grade level.

The response is not a 2 because there is a weak beginning “My name is . . .” and the ideas are a bit more than a list with some formulaic organization attempted. The response is not a 4 because there is not effective, functional word choice, and the ideas are not supported with relevant details throughout.

W. Dr.

AZ
April 21, 2009Dr. N
Principal
W. Ave
AZ

Dear Dr. N :

My name is . I have heard that you are inviting popular authors to come to Favorite Authors week. I would like to have Beverly Cleary come to Favorite Authors week.

Beverly Cleary is a popular author. Her books are appropriate for all ages. Her books are especially school appropriate. She writes school stories like The Ramona Quimby series. Her novels captivate the reader, moving you to the setting. They are fun to read,

especially for AR points! I would like to learn more about her. Could you have her come to our school?

If Beverly Cleary come to our school her visit would please many students. Since so many enjoy her books, it is only fitting to have her come. Many would want to meet her, I'm sure. Ms. Cleary could tell us stories, like how to get published, and how she became an author. She could tell us what it's like, living as a favorite author. The student body would be grateful to you, Dr. N, for letting her come and speak to us.

It would be a memorable and pleasurable experience to have Ms. Cleary come to our school. Many students would be grateful. Please consider my request. We will all benefit.

Sincerely,

Grade 6

Score Point 4c (Set 2)

The response is is clear and coherent with appropriate order and structure. The relevent details add support but are often limited. “Her stories captivate the reader, moving you to the setting.” is a good detail, but what specifically captivates the reader? Also, “They are fun to read, especially for AR points!” is a general support that needs more explanation. The beginning and ending are recognizeable, and the writing is organized without formulaic transitions. The attempt at complete letter formatting is noted, and although not entirely correct, it does indicate some skill. At times, words seem to be carefully chosen (appropriate, captivate, only fitting, memorable, pleasurable, consider), but functional words are more often used (like to have, fun to read, to learn more about, could tell us). Sentences sound natural. Conventions are correctly used.

The writing is not scored a 3 because both a beginning and ending are present and ideas are organized clearly. Details fit and are not uneven or off-topic. Word choice is not monotonous and sentences are not mechanical-sounding. The response is not a 5 because the exploration of the topic is not thorough nor does it demonstrate control. Sentences are not varied.

4/21/09

Middle School

E St.

Az,

Dear Ms. C. :

I favorite. Authors Week is coming up and I know you still haven't invited an author to come and speak to us. I was wondering if you would consider inviting Cornilia Junke. There are a lot of things that make her qualified to speak at our school.

For example, both of the books she has written have acquired awards and it isn't hard to see why. Her books are filled with magical adventures that touch the hearts of the kids here at D. I love how she brings her stories to life with her exquisite detail. There is never a dull moment with Ms. Junke. Even when she is reading a story aloud or making a speech, there is a hint of magic in her voice that is hard to ignore. The majestic words she uses in her books makes kids want to read. Cornilia says, "When I hear

a child say that they like to read, my heart soars." She also says that reading is the way to succeed. She loves to see children succeeding the way she did, by writing stories for other peoples enjoyment. Mr. Funke says that even if she got payed nothing, she would still write books. That shows a lot of dedication.

Please consider inviting Cornelia Funke to be our guest speaker for Favorite Authors Week. She is my favorite author, and the favorite author of many students and teachers here at _____. I know it would mean a lot to the children if you invited her. I can promise you would not regret it. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Score Point 5c (Set 2)

The response demonstrates clarity, focus, and control in development and organization. Relevant details support the topic in a thorough and balanced way. The writer offers compelling reasons why the author should be invited to Favorite Authors Week. “. . . both of the books she has written have aquired awards. . .” “Her books are filled with magical adventures . . .” “. . . there is a hint of magic in her voice that is hard to ignore.” Letter format includes the date, return address, salutation, and closing and, although not correctly applied, it does indicate knowledge of letter format. The beginning is not inviting but the closing is satisfying. The audience is established at the beginning and referred to at the end. The writer connects with the reader because of the commitment shown to the topic. “I know that it would mean a lot to the children if you invited her.” “Ms. Funke says that even if she was payed nothing, she would still write books.” Words often show careful choice and are crafted into varied sentences. “Her books are filled with magical adventures that touch the hearts of kids here at D_____.” “Cornelia says, ‘when I hear a child say that they like to read, my heart soars.’” Conventions are not as skilled as the other elements in the paper, but even with the errors, the reader easily understands the message.

The response is not a 4 because of the commitment to audience and topic, the thorough exploration, and the varied sentences. The paper is not a 6 because the clarity and control are not exceptional, the beginning is not creative, and conventions are not always correct.

Mr. P

N. Ave.

AZ

Dear Mr. P

When you were younger, did you ever have a favorite author? Did you ever dream of meeting this author? I have. I have dreamed of my favorite author reading one of his books to me and expressing his feelings that he had when writing this book.

For our school's Favorite Authors week, I would like you to consider having Lemony Snicket as one of our guests to speak to the students at our school. For one reason, some of my favorite books are written by him. This series is called A Series of Unfortunate Events. These books are thrilling, mysterious, and keep you on the edge of your seat! Lemony Snicket's stories are also grade level appropriate, fun, entertaining, and they expand your vocabulary. I have been reading A Series of Unfortunate Events for a while, and once I'm through with one book, I go straight to the next one. I'm sure that when you were younger and in

SCHOOL, you had 2 favorite author too. You
might have wished that you could meet
this author also. So, Mr. P please
consider having Lemony Snicket at our
Schools favorite Author's week, and
trust me, you will not regret it!
Thank you very much,

The writing demonstrates exceptional clarity, focus, and control. The creative exploration of the topic uses rich and relevant details. "I have dreamed of having my favorite author read a book to me and expressing his feelings that he had when writing this book." "The books are thrilling, mysterious, and keep you on the edge of your seat!" The beginning is inviting and draws the reader in immediately with questions that create a common bond between the writer and reader. Letter format is done well. Words are carefully chosen and crafted into sentences to enhance meaning. "I have been reading A Series of Unfortunate Events for awhile, and once im through with one book, I go straight to the next one." "Please consider having Lemony Snicket at our schools Favorite Author's Week, and, trust me, you will not regret it!" The interaction with the reader is committed and intentional, surfacing throughout the paper. "I'm sure that when you were younger and in school, you had a favorite author, too." Conventions are strong although not creative.

This paper is not a 5 because it demonstrates exceptional clarity, focus, and control. The strong and intentional interaction that is created between the writer and reader is supported throughout the response.